

REVIEWS.

Littleton's Tenures in English. Edited by Eugene Wambaugh. (Legal Classic Series.) John Byrne & Co., Washington, D. C. 1903. 1 vol., pp. lxxxiv and 341, sheep.

Littleton's Tenures, in spite of the fact that it "formed the introduction to legal education from a hundred years before the publication of Coke's Institutes until fifty years after the publication of Blackstone's Commentaries," is a work which, at the present day, appeals much more to the student of the origin and history of our law than it does to the general practitioner. We suppose that no branch of the law has undergone greater changes in the course of the centuries than has that of real property; and it requires only a glance at the table of contents to see how entirely unconnected with modern real property law is probably nine-tenths of the Tenures. We will not say the most valuable, but undoubtedly the most interesting, part of this volume to the ordinary lawyer will be the excellent introduction by Prof. Wambaugh. Like the other volumes of the Legal Classic Series this volume is excellently gotten up and excellently edited. It is not overloaded with notes, and there is no attempt to transform Littleton into a modern text-book on real property; but those who wish to read the plain, unaltered text of the Tenures, just as Littleton wrote it, will here find what they seek.

C. B.

Legal Masterpieces. Edited by Van Vechten Veeder, of the New York Bar. Keefe-Davidson Co., St. Paul, Minn. 1903. 2 vols., cloth, pp. 1350.

There have been numerous collections published within recent years of the notable examples of forensic eloquence, some embracing selections from all the great speeches extant, others confined to the oratory born of our own political development. The present collection is, as its name implies, essentially legal in character, aiming to present, from the whole field of English and American legal literature, specimens of the best models of the various forms of discourse and composition in which the lawyer's work is embodied. The aim has been to select topics of general interest and importance, presented through some great legal personality, and through these selections to illustrate the best methods of making thought most effective.

Though any such selection must be far from exhaustive, and many notable contributions to legal literature must necessarily be omitted, the work of the editor in choosing the most excellent specimens of logical argument expressed with rhetorical skill and eloquence has been most carefully done. A wide range of subject

matter is covered by the forty-three selections, illustrating all the recognized forms of legal discourse and composition. There are twenty-six arguments before courts or juries, eleven judicial opinions, three professional opinions, two briefs, and one charge to a jury. The rights of nations, the constitutional development of our country, the growth of international law, and the historic efforts for individual liberty, are among the subjects of the selections from the ablest efforts of such leading English and American lawyers as Lord Mansfield, Thomas Erskine, Lord Brougham, Wendell Phillips, Chief Justice Marshall, and others of like eminence.

The work is edited with an introduction in which an analysis is made of forensic argumentation and exposition, followed by an historical and critical sketch of legal literature in England and America. Each selection is preceded by a sketch of its author, giving biographical data and a carefully prepared outline of his salient characteristics. There are explanatory notes designed to give briefly but clearly all the facts necessary for a proper understanding of the selections. An excellent index, including the legal points involved, adds greatly to the value of the work.

In the wide range and general interest of its subject-matter, the excellence of the selections made as models of discourse and composition, and the careful and thorough editorial treatment, the present work deserves to stand at the head of compilations of this sort, from the standpoint of the legal practitioner or student. Although it may be that the ideal orator is a genius born, a man of vigorous mind and strong determination may through careful study and application become at least an impressive and convincing speaker, and to this end, as well as to develop a finer sense of proportion and more wholesome habits of mental discrimination, the study of the best models is the greatest aid. From this standpoint the present work is most valuable.

E. T. B.